

COUNTY COUNCIL  
OF  
HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

BILL NO. 00-63 (As Amended)

Introduced by Council President Hirsch at the request of the County Executive  
and Council Members Heselton and Stepp

Legislative Day No. 00-34 Date December 5, 2000

AN ACT to add the definition of fire official to Section 244-1, Definitions, of Article I, General Provisions; to repeal and re-enact, with amendments, Section 244-6, Establishment; removal of obstructions; cost of signs or markings, of Article II, Fire Lanes; to add Subsection A(18) to Section 244-17.1, Stopping, standing and parking, of Article IIIA, Parking; and to repeal and re-enact, with amendments, Subsection E of Section 244-20, Parking fines, of Article IV, Citations and Penalties, all of Chapter 244, Vehicles and Traffic, of the Harford County Code, as amended, to provide for a definition of fire official; to provide for the designation of a fire lane under certain circumstances; to provide for a monetary fine for a violation of this section; to provide that a vehicle cannot be parked in a fire lane; and generally relating to fire lanes.

By the Council, December 5, 2000

Introduced, read first time, ordered posted and public hearing scheduled

on: January 2, 2001

at: 7:40 p.m.

By Order: James E. Massey, Jr., Council Administrator

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Having been posted and notice of time and place of hearing and title of Bill having been published according to the Charter, a public hearing was held on January 2, 2001, and concluded on, January 2, 2001.

James E. Massey, Jr., Council Administrator

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW. [Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law. Underlining indicates language added to Bill by amendment. Language lined through indicates matter stricken out of Bill by amendment.

Section 1. Be It Enacted By The County Council of Harford County, Maryland, That the definition of fire official be, and it is hereby, added to Section 244-1, Definitions, of Article I, General Provisions; that Section 244-6, Establishment; removal of obstructions; cost of signs or markings, of Article II, Fire Lanes, be, and it is hereby, repealed and re-enacted, with amendments; that Subsection A(18) be, and it is hereby, added to Section 244-17.1, Stopping, standing and parking, of Article IIIA, Parking; and that Subsection E of Section 244-20, Parking fines, of Article IV, Citations and Penalties, be, and it is hereby, repealed and re-enacted, with amendments, all of Chapter 244, Vehicles and Traffic, of the Harford County Code, as amended, and all to read as follows:

**Chapter 244. Vehicles and Traffic**

**Article I. General Provisions**

**§ 244-1. Definitions.**

For the purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them by this section:

FIRE LANE – [A lane required or to be permanently open for the ingress or egress of fire and other emergency vehicles only, in order that fires and other disasters may be prevented or controlled and exitways kept unobstructed for life safety.] A PERMANENTLY OPEN ACCESS ROADWAY WITH ALL-WEATHER DRIVING SURFACE NOT LESS THAN 20 FEET OF UNOBSTRUCTED WIDTH, WITH ADEQUATE ROAD TURNING RADIUS, CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING THE LOADS OF FIRE APPARATUS, HAVING A MINIMUM CLEARANCE OF 13 FEET 6 INCHES, AND REQUIRED FOR EVERY COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, PUBLIC

1 OR SEMI-PUBLIC BUILDING.

2 FIRE OFFICIAL – THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, A DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL  
3 OR A CHIEF OF A HARFORD COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY.

4 **Article II. Fire Lanes**

5 **§ 244-6. [Establishment; removal of obstructions; cost of signs or markings.]**

6 **DESIGNATION.**

7 [The Fire Marshal or the Fire Chief of the fire company serving the particular area shall study  
8 the access to all buildings, especially those which are in a congested area in the county and are used  
9 by the public, and shall determine whether such buildings require the designation and markings of  
10 fire lanes. If the Fire Marshal, in coordination with the Fire Chief of the fire company serving the  
11 area involved, shall find that any private entrance or exit, sidewalk, fire hydrant or vehicular  
12 driveway or interior private driveway or sidewalk, existing or proposed, is obstructed or is likely to  
13 be obstructed by vehicles, debris, snow, construction material or other matter likely to interfere with  
14 the ingress or egress of emergency vehicles, he shall order that the obstruction be removed at once  
15 and that such areas be kept clear of obstruction at all times. In order to facilitate the keeping of such  
16 ingress and egress areas free from obstruction, the Fire Marshal or Fire Chief shall erect the proper  
17 warning signs and shall designate placement thereof in cooperation with the Department of Public  
18 Works, and he shall designate proper fire lanes, which shall be clearly marked with the words, "Fire  
19 Lane – Do Not Block," and such curb, road, sidewalk or driveway or other access shall also have  
20 painted upon it, in a highly visible color, lines that will delineate the areas to be kept clear of any  
21 obstruction. Where such signs or markings must be erected or painted on privately owned property,

1 the cost of the signs or marking or painting shall be borne by the owners of the property.]

2 A. THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, IN COORDINATION WITH THE CHIEF OF THE  
3 FIRE COMPANY SERVING THE AREA INVOLVED, SHALL HAVE THE AUTHORITY AND  
4 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY TO DESIGNATE A FIRE LANE. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE  
5 FIRE MARSHAL, ANY FIRE OFFICIAL MAY DESIGNATE A FIRE LANE. FIRE LANES  
6 MAY BE DESIGNATED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS, OR ANY PORTION THEREOF:

7 (1) ENTRANCES AND EXITS TO COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, PUBLIC  
8 OR SEMI-PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

9 (2) ROADWAYS PROVIDING ACCESS TO SPRINKLER OR STANDPIPE  
10 SYSTEMS.

11 (3) ROADWAYS THAT LEAD TO, ARE NEXT TO OR IN FRONT OF FIRE  
12 HYDRANTS.

13 (4) ROADWAYS PROVIDING ACCESS TO FIRE STATIONS.

14 (5) ROADWAYS NEXT TO MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS (APARTMENTS,  
15 CONDOMINIUMS, ETC.) IF THE ROADWAY DOES NOT MEET THE PHYSICAL  
16 REQUIREMENTS FOUND IN THE DEFINITION OF A FIRE LANE.

17 B. WHEN A FIRE OFFICIAL DETERMINES A FIRE LANE IS REQUIRED, THE  
18 PROPERTY OWNER SHALL:

19 (1) CLEARLY DESIGNATE THE FIRE LANE BY POSTING A SIGN.  
20 SIGNING SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 12 INCHES BY 17 INCHES AND STATE "FIRE LANE  
21 - NO PARKING." SIGNS SHALL BE RED LETTERING ON WHITE BACKGROUND AND

1 MOUNTED ON TREATED WOOD OR METAL SIGN POSTS AT A SPACING OF 50 FEET  
2 ALONG THE FIRE LANE. IF THE LANE IS LESS THAN 50 FEET, A SIGN SHALL BE  
3 POSTED AT EACH END OF THE LANE. SIGNS SHALL BE PLAINLY VISIBLE TO  
4 MOTORISTS AND AT LEAST 7 FEET HIGH MEASURED FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE  
5 SIGN TO THE GROUND.

6 (2) PAINT ANY CURB OR PAVEMENT "FIRE ENGINE RED"  
7 THROUGHOUT THE LIMITS OF THE FIRE LANE. IF PAVEMENT IS PAINTED, IT SHALL  
8 BE MARKED WITH LETTERING 8 INCHES HIGH WITH 6-INCH STROKES "NO PARKING -  
9 FIRE LANE." MARKING LEGENDS SHALL BE SPACED AT A MAXIMUM OF 100 FEET  
10 APART.

11 C. MAINTENANCE.

12 (1) A PROPERTY OWNER SHALL MAINTAIN A CLEAR SPACE OF AT  
13 LEAST 36 INCHES AROUND ANY FIRE HYDRANT LOCATED ON HIS OR HER PROPERTY  
14 AND SHALL MAINTAIN AN UNOBSTRUCTED AREA (I.E., FREE OF LANDSCAPING OR  
15 OTHER OBSTRUCTIONS) BETWEEN THE CURB AND THE FACE OF THE HYDRANT.

16 (2) A PROPERTY OWNER SHALL MAINTAIN AN UNOBSTRUCTED  
17 PATH TO ANY FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION LOCATED ON A BUILDING. THE  
18 PATH SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 4 FEET WIDE AND 6 FEET HIGH. THE  
19 UNOBSTRUCTED AREA SHALL EXTEND A MINIMUM OF 15 FEET, MEASURED ALONG  
20 THE CURB, TO EITHER SIDE OF THE CENTERLINE OF THE HYDRANT.

21 D. VIOLATIONS.

1           (1)    A PROPERTY OWNER WHO FAILS TO PROPERLY MARK AND  
2   MAINTAIN A FIRE LANE BY APPROPRIATE SIGNS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
3   MARKING OR WHO FAILS TO MAINTAIN UNOBSTRUCTED ACCESS OR CLEAR SPACE  
4   TO A HYDRANT OR FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION AS REQUIRED BY THIS  
5   SECTION SHALL BE LIABLE FOR A CIVIL PENALTY OF \$100. EACH DAY A VIOLATION  
6   CONTINUES IS A SEPARATE OFFENSE.

7           (2)    A FINE UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE IMPOSED IN THE  
8   FOLLOWING MANNER:

9                   (A)    A FIRE OFFICIAL WHO OBSERVES A VIOLATION SHALL  
10   REPORT THE VIOLATION TO THE MANAGER OF THE DIVISION OF EMERGENCY  
11   OPERATIONS, DESIGNEE OR EMPLOYEE OF THE DIVISION.

12                   (B)    AN EMPLOYEE OF THE DIVISION OF EMERGENCY  
13   OPERATIONS WHO OBSERVES A VIOLATION OR TO WHOM A VIOLATION HAS BEEN  
14   REPORTED SHALL VERIFY THAT A VIOLATION EXISTS AND SHALL ISSUE A  
15   CITATION TO THE PROPERTY OWNER.

16                   (C)    THE CITATION SHALL BE HAND DELIVERED OR SENT BY  
17   CERTIFIED MAIL.

18                   (D)    IF 15 DAYS AFTER DELIVERING OR MAILING THE NOTICE, A  
19   VIOLATION CONTINUES TO EXIST, HARFORD COUNTY SHALL TAKE ACTION TO  
20   ENSURE COMPLIANCE. ANY COSTS INCURRED SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF  
21   THE PROPERTY OWNER.

1    **Article IIIA. Parking**

2    **§ 244-17.1. Stopping, standing and parking.**

3            A.     The provisions of this section apply except as necessary to avoid conflict with other  
4    traffic or in compliance with law or the directions of a police officer or traffic control device.

5                    (18)    A PERSON MAY NOT PARK A VEHICLE IN A FIRE LANE.

6    **Article IV. Citations and Penalties**

7    **§ 244-20. Parking fines.**

8            E.     The fine for a parking violation in a fire lane as set forth in [§244-6] §244-17.1 is  
9    [thirty-five dollars (\$35.)) ~~\$55~~ \$120.

10    Section 2.     And Be It Further Enacted, That this Act shall take effect 60 calendar days from the  
11    date it becomes law.

12    Section 3.     And Be It Further Enacted, that upon notification from a fire official that a fire lane is  
13    required, a property owner, including but not limited to Harford County Government entities and  
14    Harford County Public Schools, shall have 90 days to comply with the requirements of this act.

EFFECTIVE:     March 19, 2001

*The Council Administrator does hereby certify that  
fifteen (15) copies of this Bill are immediately available for  
distribution to the public and the press.*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Administrator

**00-63**  
**AS AMENDED**

HARFORD COUNTY BILL NO. 00-63

Brief Title) Fire Officials and Fire Lanes (as amended)

is herewith submitted to the County Council of Harford County for enrollment as being the text as finally passed.

**CERTIFIED TRUE AND CORRECT**

**ENROLLED**

James E. Massey, Jr.  
Council Administrator

[Signature]

Date January 9, 2001

Date 1-9-01

**BY THE COUNCIL**

Read the third time.

Passed: LSD 01-03 (January 9, 2001)

Failed of Passage: \_\_\_\_\_

By Order

James E. Massey Jr.  
Council Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 11th day of January, 2001, at 4:00 p.m.



James E. Massey Jr.  
Council Administrator

**BY THE EXECUTIVE**

James M. Harbison  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

APPROVED: Date 1-16-01

**BY THE COUNCIL**

This Bill (No. 00-63 a/a), having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, becomes law on January 16, 2001.

James E. Massey Jr.  
Council Administrator

**00-63**

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 19, 2001

**AS AMENDED**